

**Written Testimony in Support of HB1530**

Higher Education - Undocumented Students - Out-of-State Tuition Exemption Eligibility

**To:** Chair Ben Barnes, Vice Chair Anne R. Kaiser and Members of the Maryland House Appropriations Committee

**From:** Dana Stevenson, Montgomery County Public Schools Teacher

Hello! My name is Dana Stevenson and I am a teacher at John F. Kennedy High School in Silver Spring, Maryland. I have taught in Montgomery County Public Schools for the past 6 years in a community with a majority immigrant population. As a high school social teacher and yearbook adviser, I have written countless college recommendation letters and witnessed firsthand the unique hurdles our students face when trying to gain access to a college education. Many of our students who are immigrants, children of immigrants, and/or undocumented students go to extraordinary lengths to fight for their right to an education, from spending late nights translating information for their parents and navigating the complexity of the FAFSA process to working extra jobs to support their families while saving for tuition and fees.

I am writing in support of HB1530 because I firmly believe that the requirement to submit three years of tax returns to qualify for in-state tuition and federal loans places an undue burden on undocumented students in Maryland. The current process is onerous and bars many students from pursuing higher education. This bill would not provide an unfair advantage to undocumented students; it would merely remove some of the unnecessary obstacles that limit the access of qualified students to a college education.

I kindly urge you to take the necessary steps to ensure the passage of HB1530. Our Maryland public schools -- *including* our higher education institutions -- are enriched by the contributions of immigrant students to their academic communities. Undocumented students deserve the same access to higher education as their peers. Please take action so that another graduating class of students does not lose this critical opportunity.

Respectfully,  
Dana Stevenson